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RECENT LITERATURE

NOTES AND ABSTRACTS

Economic Theory and "Social Reform."—There is a fundamental lack of harmony between the basic notions back of economic theory and the reform program. The economist insists that the social reform movement is without fundamental principles; the social reformer condemns the current economic theory because it is based on the analysis of the industrial system of a previous age. There can be no real combat between the two because economic theory is intellectual and the reformers are passionate. The recent work of J. A. Hobson, *Work and Wealth: A Human Valuation*, gives opportunity for a partial and tentative statement of the points at issue. The chief contributions of Hobson are contributions to particular subjects. The book is also valuable as a contemporary theoretical document. Being an early if not premature attempt to reduce the social-reform movement to a theoretical statement, the discussion shows within itself the conflict of the assumptions that are striving for mastery. It reveals many of the disputed points between neo-classicism and the theory that progressivism implies.—Walton H. Hamilton, *Journal of Political Economy*, June, 1915.
E. B. R.

Business and Democracy.—Many important forms of the social fabric are today in the melting-pot. New proposals are legion, old landmarks submerged. Men—and women—have found in democracy the opportunity and the occasion to give expression to a raw, untrained pride of opinion on the most difficult questions of law and economics. Democracy in its old significance bore on political affairs, but now we have industrial democracy—economic equality—social justice. The equality of political democracy is by facile logic transferred to industrial democracy. It is assumed that since one man's vote is as good as another's, one man's wages should be as good as another's. The difference in earning power of different individuals is not taken into account, but it is implicitly assumed that workmen are justified in demanding higher wages as long as employers and employees are not equally rich. Our system of property is being assailed. It is forgotten that this system has grown out of and in accordance with the felt needs of the people. Now comes socialism and proposes to put the control of capital into the hands of the state. Socialism is a philosophy of failure and is not likely to succeed in the end, but it is coloring industrial democracy through and through. We must fight every attempt to restrict the freedom of individual initiative in industry whenever it may be shown that it does not interfere with the rights of others. This situation makes it plain what business must face. Industrial democracy will no longer leave business affairs to the natural working out of the economic laws, but instead will substitute an artificial political control. One of the side shows of this industrial democracy, that has an important relation to business, is the "return of government to the people." Our whole past history has shown us that difficult matters of lawmaking should not be left to the untrained—to a hit-and-miss body of citizens. If present rule is bad, the remedy is to elect better representatives. We are most truly returning the government to the people when we are placing it in the hands of intelligent representatives and taking it out of the hands of the bigoted and ignorant.—J. Laurence Laughlin, *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1915.
R. W. S.

The Movement for Public Labor Exchanges.—Since the establishment of the first public employment office in this country, in Ohio in 1890, 25 other states have established such offices and are operating in 80 cities. Most of these are operated by states, but some are under the control of cities. In addition to these, the Federal Bureau of Immigration has maintained labor-distributing agencies since 1907. The state and city agencies have been extremely inefficient in matters of interchange of data between the different offices, in following up results of assignments to prospective jobs, in

reliability of records, and in reaching others than the "down-and-outers." However, in 1907 Massachusetts led in developing an efficient system, and various states have followed in developing and adopting a business-like method, an intelligent and reliable system of records, care in selecting the office force, committees to advise in the management to insure impartiality in case of labor disputes, vocational guidance and protection bureaus for children and immigrants. There is, however, still a lack in uniformity of method, in co-operation, and in definite policies of management. Laws have not embodied safeguards that are shown by experience to be necessary. This criticism also holds against the federal laws advocated by the American Association for Labor Legislation, the North American Civic League for Immigrants, and the Bureau of Immigration. Experience shows that successful labor exchanges must include: (1) selection of officers under civil service; (2) a joint advisory committee composed of representative employers and workers; (3) an accurate and uniform system of records; and (4) co-operation and interchange of data among the various employment offices. The organization (1913) of the American Association of Public Employment Offices and the National Farm Labor Exchange (1914) marks a forward step. A great advance is to be gained also by the provision for a Bureau of Employment in the Department of Labor, which will co-operate with, extend, supervise, co-ordinate, and standardize existing bureaus but will not itself maintain local employment offices.—William M. Leiserson, *Journal of Political Economy*, July, 1915.
E. T. H.

Labor Legislation in the Clayton Act.—The justification of the adoption of the Clayton act is sought in the "declaration" that labor of a human being is not a commodity nor article of exchange nor commerce. This is the major premise from which the promoters of the Clayton bill proceed to justify their claim for exemption from the consequences of the Sherman Anti-trust law which was made effective against certain phases of labor combination and activities by the court decision rendered in the Danbury hat case. Combination for boycotting is declared by this decision to fall within the definition of restraint of trade and to be subject to the threefold recovery of damages produced by the restraint. The Sherman act had its origin in the evils of massed capital, but the application was so widened in the minds of the legislators that the source of restraint was regarded as immaterial. Hence the law stood as a deterrent against the unrestrained dominion of unions. But the American Federation of Labor has constantly argued for the right of the boycott as well as for organization and strikes as a means of putting labor on a level with capital. In the Clayton bill labor has sought to secure equality of freedom and to establish a part of its larger struggle for personal rights. By this act the Anti-trust law shall not be construed as forbidding the existence and operation of labor organizations, nor held to be illegal combination or conspiracies in restraint of trade; nor shall labor organizations be forbidden or restrained from "lawfully carrying out the legitimate objects of such organizations." The phrase "legitimate objects" lacks definition, but the act prohibits injunctions and restraining orders, and many acts are no longer unlawful. Notable among these are the boycott and the provision that an act which is not illegal when performed by an individual shall not be held to be illegal when performed by a group. These provisions of the Clayton act the author declares to be a violation of the principles of liberty and class legislation propounded by the Constitution and by court decisions.—George W. Wickersham, *American Federationist*, July, 1915.
E. T. H.

Trade Unionism versus Welfare Work for Women.—One-half of the eight million women classed as being in gainful occupations are industrial wage-earners. Modern methods of industry bear down oppressively hard upon young women with neither the ability nor the training to engage in interesting tasks. The labor is monotonous, poorly paid, and conducted at nerve-destroying speed. The social consciousness is becoming aroused to the physical effects of such toil. But until this awakening conscience can get itself expressed in legislation something else must take its place. The two agencies at work are trade unionism and employers' welfare work. These two represent distinct methods. The labor union is a movement by the wage-workers and for the wage-workers. Women are just beginning to realize the possibilities of

this method of self-improvement. They have been slow to avail themselves of the benefits of organization. Many feel that their stay in the industrial world is temporary and are indifferent to, or endure, the conditions under which they must work. Union men have not always been friendly toward women's unions, fearing it meant a lower wage scale, but this attitude is now changed. The welfare work in general includes improved physical conditions, opportunities for rest and recreation, educational work, and benefit funds. This plan has been successful in some cases, and those who have grown to distrust union methods are looking to it hopefully as a final solution of labor difficulties. The test of the value of each institution is the type of citizen it produces. The trade union holds up to its members the ideal of class betterment and they are thus stimulated to further endeavor. The principle for which the trade union stands is sound. In the other case the employee is the recipient of favors; it is a system of bestowing by the employer. This does not tend to strengthen and enrich character in the employees. It does not strengthen the laborers' power of initiative; it is likely to make them limp of will and uncertain of purpose.—Anna Marion Maclean, *Popular Science Monthly*, July, 1915. E. B. R.

Work, Women, and Marriage.—The present war has surrounded woman with an entirely different set of conditions and is having important effects upon the process of development through which she has been rapidly passing. It is important to note the consequent effects upon working and marriage conditions. During the last century only a relatively small number of women were engaged in work outside the home and these were found largely in certain special districts. Now the demand for workers is country-wide in extent. The period of depression immediately preceding this new demand put most of those engaged in service, clerkships, dressmaking, the professions, etc., out of work. The present demand is for industrial labor and it is so great and the supply so small that the industrial woman can pick and choose. The increasing demand is then calling in greater and greater numbers of the middle and upper classes. It furnishes them what they have been striving for—an open field for women as well as men. This is no doubt having beneficial effects in breaking down the conventionalities, whims, prejudices, etc., which they have formerly held toward work. The good effects should not be rated too highly, however, as it is only into the lower, less desirable forms of labor that they are being called. This changing state of affairs will have important effects upon marriage. The number of unmarried in the industrial class is inconsiderable. The middle classes, however, owing to their impossibly high economic and social standards, were being more and more restrained from marriage. This fault has been largely due to the social whims and artificialities set up by the women. The fact that these women are now at work will serve to break down these barriers and bring marriage back to a saner, more natural basis. Romance is again alive. War is tearing aside pretenses, shattering artifices, and bringing us back to real things.—Ethel Colquhoun, *The Living Age*, July 24, 1915.

R. W. S.

Unemployment in American Cities.—The dominant problem in American cities the past winter was not economy, nor administration, nor politics, but unemployment. Chicago's 190,000 unemployed, Philadelphia's 200,000, New York's 350,000, and other cities in corresponding proportion presented the problem in an unprecedented extent. Of the real causes we have learned but little. Little was done by the federal government to relieve the situation, nor have state measures had a much more extensive effect, although Idaho has passed a radical bill requiring the several counties to provide emergency employment to propertyless, unemployed citizens. At least forty cities have had unemployment commissions. Emergency municipal workshops, special relief appropriations and donations, employment bureaus under the direction of city, church, and public or private philanthropic agencies—these have been some of the devices employed toward lightening the pressure. Most of the relief measures have been in no way constructive, but merely palliative. Soup kitchens, bundle days, the provision of temporary sleeping-quarters in city halls and police stations do nothing toward warding off a repetition of the misery another year. Unemployment insurance is still neglected; but the "back-to-the-land" movement has made encouraging progress. A great deal of preliminary and essential educational

work has been done, at least, and we may begin to hope for movements of industrial organization whose efforts to cope with the situation will be effective.—Frances A. Kellor, *National Municipal Review*, July, 1915. E. E. E.

The Economic Basis of the Decline of Ancient Culture.—The causes usually advanced to explain the decline of ancient culture seem no longer to be substantiated. Christianity was embraced by too small a proportion of the Roman populace to be held largely responsible. The explanation that Rome suffered from a drainage of its gold and bullion to India rests upon too slender evidence to be seriously considered. Depopulation cannot be advanced as a cause of decline; it was primarily a result. And slavery in the later centuries was not sufficiently common to be held responsible. The true cause seems to lie in the agrarian policy of ancient Rome. The agriculture of the Empire came to be maintained chiefly through the *coloni* or sub-lessees, who were, without being slaves, bound to the soil. The very protection which the state gave them from the abuses of the large, absentee leaseholders (*conductores*) compelled them to dwell within their fixed domain, and the fruits of their labor went largely into contributions to their overlords. Under their disinterested care production declined and much land became waste. Nor was it possible for the government to re-establish the strong peasantry which had been crowded off the land when slavery was the vogue. This weakened, depleted rural population declined in consumptive power, and the market upon which the city manufactories chiefly depended correspondingly diminished. With the decline of production which followed came the abandonment of the cities which lost their attractiveness as their industrial vigor decayed. It was "the loss of this economic freedom even more than the loss of political freedom which had such diastrophic results upon private initiative, and finally undermined the ancient Graeco-Roman civilization."—W. L. Westermann, *American Historical Review*, July, 1915. E. E. E.

How the Commission-Manager Plan Is Getting Along.—The Commission-Manager plan is a very new thing in American municipal government, dating only from January, 1913, when it first went into effect in Sumter, South Carolina. Since that beginning twenty-four other towns and cities have taken it up, and five states have provisions enabling their cities to adopt the plan. The possibility of city managing as a distinct profession seems likely. In December, 1914, the first annual City Managers' Convention was held. The state universities of Texas, California, and Michigan have projected courses of training for prospective city managers. Men who have made good in the office in one city are being called upon to serve other cities in the same capacity. So far, the communities which have adopted the plan have found an almost uniform experience of lowered cost for increased service. The longer possible tenure of office and the freedom from political complications coupled with a presumably expert preparation for the task make for a higher efficiency on the part of this official than can be expected of the untrained mayor who holds his office as a result of the turning of the wheel of politics. To maintain this efficiency the office must by no means be allowed to become a political plaything.—Richard S. Childs, *National Municipal Review*, July, 1915. E. E. E.

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